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ACTION, SIL-01

INFO LOG-00 ADS-00 INR-10 EUR-00 CIAE-00 EB-00 ARA-00
NSAE-00 COME-00 SSO-00 AMAD-01 LAB-04 STR-17 INRE-00
OPM-01 /034 W

-----240006 051434Z /48 38

O 051425Z AUG 88
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9518
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

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DEPT. FOR S/IL (FREEMAN); ARA (LEADER)

DEPT. PASS DOL/ILAB (HOLMES)

BRUSSELS FOR USEC (TURNQUIST)

Dept. of State, RPS/IPS, Margaret P. Grafeld, Dir.
☒ Release () Excise () Deny ☒ Declassify
Date 2/27/02 Exemption _____

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: ELAB, GE, NU
SUBJECT: MINISTRY OF LABOR CHASTISES THE SANDINISTAS

REF: BONN 25458

1. ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. ON AUGUST 5, MOL LATIN AMERICAN MAN HERBERT SCHMIDT
TELEPHONED LABOR COUNSELOR WITH AN UPDATE ON THEIR JULY 29
DISCUSSION (REFTEL). SCHMIDT SAID THAT, IN MINISTER
BLUEM'S ABSENCE, MOL STATE SECRETARY VOGT HAD ISSUED THE
PLANNED PRESS STATEMENT ON NICARAGUA ON THE PREVIOUS DAY,
AUGUST 4. SCHMIDT SAID HE HAD WRITTEN THE STATEMENT,
ENTITLED "FREEDOM OR TORTURE IN NICARAGUA," WHICH CENTERED
ON CRITICISM OF THE ARREST AND DETENTION OF OPPOSITION
LEADERS, ESPECIALLY THE UNION LEADERS AMONG THEM. THE

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STATEMENT WAS ISSUED JOINTLY BY VOGT AND DR. SOMMER
PRESIDENT OF THE GERMAN NICARAGUA SOCIETY, A GROUP WHICH
MONITORS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN NICARAGUA AND SUPPORTS
NICARAGUAN OPPOSITION FORCES. (SCHMIDT PROVIDED A COPY OF
THE STATEMENT WHICH WE WILL REPORT SEPARATELY.)

3. REFERRING TO HIS PREVIOUS REMARK ABOUT THE NICARAGUAN
AMBASSADOR'S RETURN TO MANAGUA, SCHMIDT SAID HE HAD SINCE
LEARNED THAT ALL NICARAGUAN AMBASSADORS IN EUROPE HAD BEEN
CALLED BACK TO MANAGUA FOR CONSULTATIONS. THE MOL MAN
SAID A "WAVE OF FORCE" IS IN PROGRESS IN MANAGUA WHICH HIS
CONTACTS BELIEVE EMANATES FROM A POWER STRUGGLE BETWEEN
PRESIDENT ORTEGA AND INTERIOR MINISTER BORGE.

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4. SCHMIDT SAID THE PLIGHT OF THE OPPOSITION LEADERS PRESENTLY BEING DETAINED IS WORSE THAN ORIGINALLY THOUGHT. INSTEAD OF THE 6 MONTHS IMPRISONMENT THEY COULD HAVE EXPECTED UNDER THE LAW LEFT OVER FROM THE SOMOZA ERA, THE SANDINISTAS INTEND TO SEND THEM TO PRISON FOR 2 TO 5 YEARS.

5. IN BONN, WHEN THE MOL LEARNED THAT THE NICARAGUAN AMBASSADOR COULD NOT ANSWER THEIR COMPLAINTS BECAUSE HE WAS BACK IN MANAGUA, ON AUGUST 2 THE MINISTRY ASKED THE CHARGE, CARLOS BENDANA TO APPEAR AT THE MINISTRY. BENDANA, WHO HAD HEADED THE EMBASSY BEFORE THE AMBASSADOR'S ARRIVAL WASN'T AVAILABLE BECAUSE HE HAD BEEN PERMANENTLY RECALLED TO NICARAGUA AND WAS PREPARING TO DEPART GERMANY. THE SECOND SECRETARY WHO RUNS THE PRO-SANDINISTA "SOLIDARITY GROUPS" IN THE FRG OFFERED TO APPEAR BUT THE MINISTRY REFUSED TO RECEIVE HIM.

6. BENDANA, WHOM SCHMIDT DESCRIBED AS A "LEFTIST

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INTELLECTUAL, MORE OBJECTIVE AND REASONABLE THAN MOST," IS OBVIOUSLY NOT PLEASED ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF RETURNING TO NICARAGUA. HIS WIFE HAS REFUSED TO FLY ON THE CUBAN AIRLINE THEY ARE SCHEDULED TO TAKE TO MANAGUA AND INSTEAD IS GOING TO COLOMBIA. BEDANA HIMSELF IS LOOKING FOR AN ALTERNATIVE AND, AMONG OTHER THINGS, HAS ENQUIRED ABOUT A POST WITH THE KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG. HE IS SCHEDULED TO DISCUSS HIS PLANS WITH SOMMER ON MONDAY (AUGUST 8). (SCHMIDT IMPLIED THAT US INTEREST AND ASSISTANCE WOULD BE WELCOMED BY BENDANA.)

7. COMMENT: BLUEM AND HIS MINISTRY OBVIOUSLY SEE THE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN NICARAGUA AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO BLAST THE SANDINISTAS, AND THROUGH THEM THOSE IN THE SPD AND AMONG HIS OLD LABOR FRIENDS WHO HAVE EMBRACED THEM AND ARE NOW STUDIOUSLY LOOKING THE OTHER WAY OR OFFERING LAME EXCUSES FOR SANDINISTA OPPRESSION.

DOBBINS

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